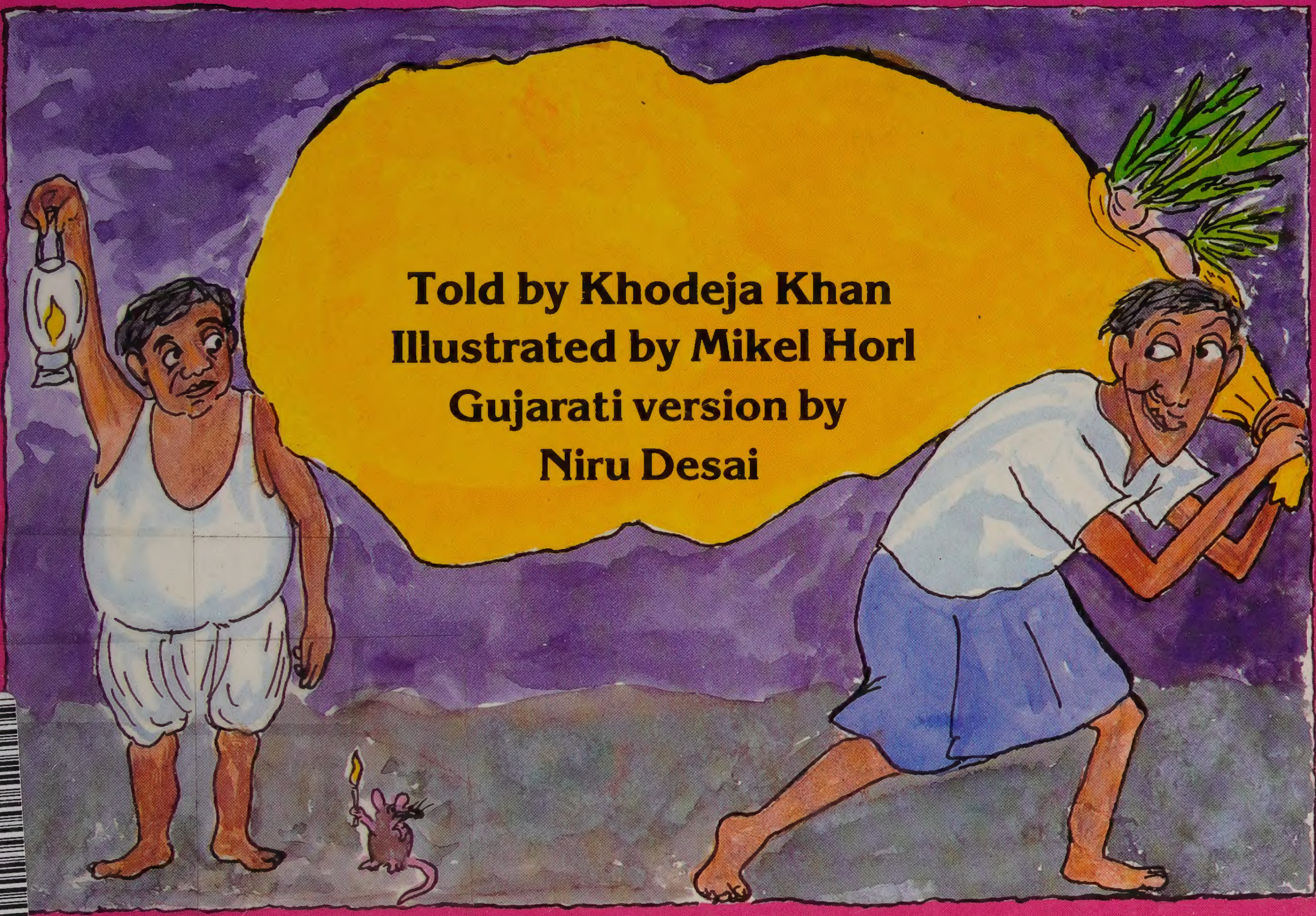
TALL TALES
SERIES

The Radish Thief



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THE RADISH THIEF

As sure as rain is wet, that there radish farmer's in his bed, sleeping snuggishly.

THE STORYTELLER

Khodeja Khan was born in Pabna, Bangladesh in 1944. She came to England in 1977, and lives in North London with her family. Khodeja is very popular as a storyteller in the family circle.

THE ILLUSTRATOR

Mikel Horl studied Graphic Design at Leeds Polytechnic. He writes and illustrates his own books as well as teaching art to both children and adults at the Royal Marsden Hospital and at a local community centre.

THE RADISH THIEF

This and Khodeja's other tales from rural Bangladesh were recorded by her daughter, Mahmooda, when she was a pupil at Hornsey Girls' School in Haringey. Khodeja heard the stories from her grandmother, who used to gather all her grandchildren around her in the evening, when housework was done and homework completed.

Although set firmly in rural Bangladesh, the humour of the story is universally appealing, and no doubt resembles many a tale told by an English farmer in the local pub.

STORYTELLERS

The whole series is based on work that has been done in the Reading Materials for Minority Groups Project (1982-1985), housed at Middlesex Polytechnic and funded by the All Saints Educational Trust. There are over 70 titles in all which will be published over the next few years in dual language form.

All the stories originate from countries where they have been handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Published by Jennie Ingham Associates Ltd 1989
64-68 Camden High Street, London NW1 0LT
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Gujarati translation by Niru Desai

ISBN 1 85474 031 8 paper bound edition
ISBN 1 85474 036 9 cased edition

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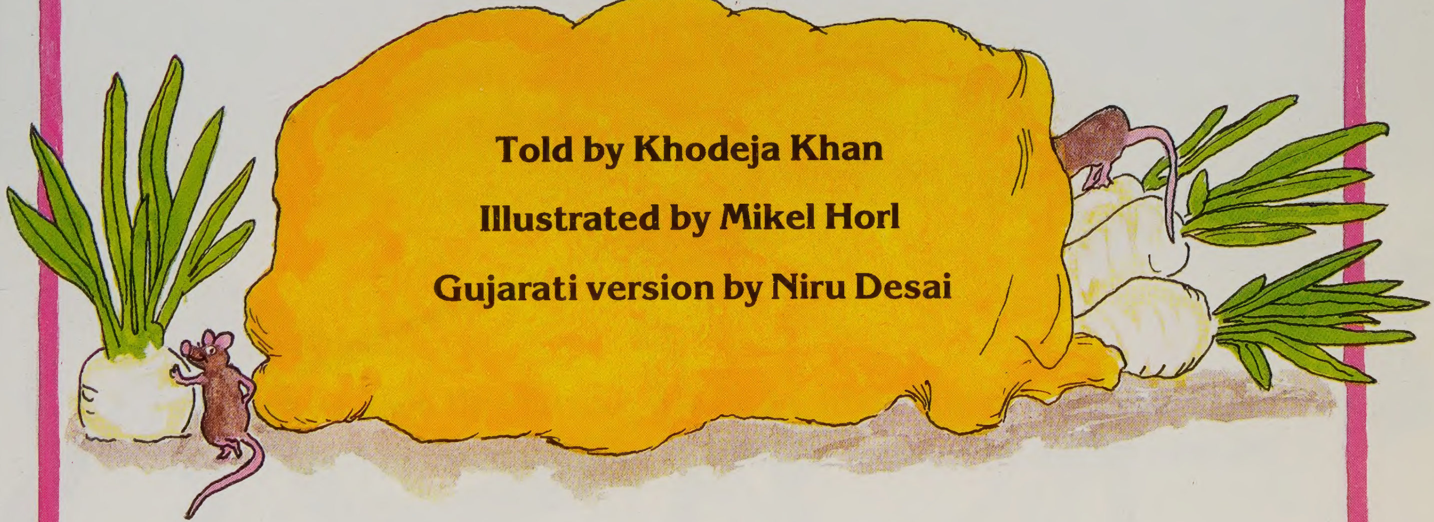
Printed in Great Britain by Purnell

The Radish Thief



Told by Khodeja Khan

Illustrated by Mikel Horl

Gujarati version by Niru Desai

STORYTELLERS

TALL TALES SERIES

There was once this farmer. He had a little plot of land where he grew his crops. Somehow he eked out a meagre living for himself and his family.

એક ખેડૂત હતો. તેની પાસે જમીનનો નાનો સરખો ટૂકડો હતો જેમાં
તે પોતાનું અનાજ ઉગાડતો હતો.

Now, one year he had a mind to grow radishes.
He planted the seeds in neat little rows and,
in no time at all, they began to sprout.

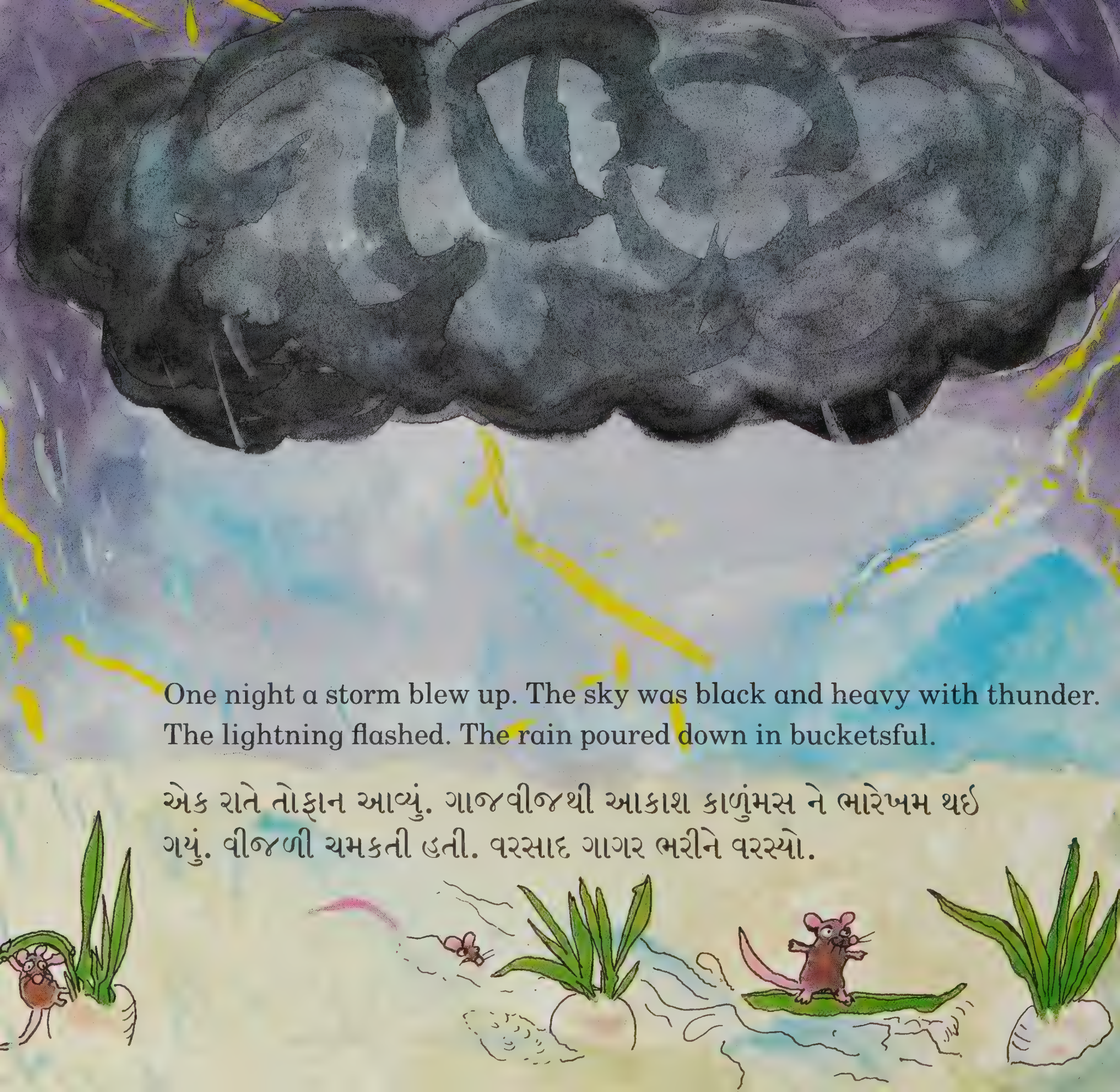
The radishes went from strength to strength.
You've never seen such a healthy, leafy crop.
The farmer became the envy of all his neighbours.

એક વરસે તેને મૂળા વાવવાનું મન થયું. તેણે સરસ રીતે નાની હારમાં બી વાવ્યાં અને થોડા સમયમાં તેમાંથી અંકુર ફૂટયા.

મૂળા તો દિવસે ન વધે તેટલા રાતે વધવા લાગ્યા. આવો મઝાનો પાંદડાંવાળો પાક કોઈએ જોયો નહોતો. બધા પાડોશીઓને ખેડૂતની અદેખાઇ આવી.

Every night, without fail, he would go out to his field with a lantern, just to make sure there were no thieves or wild animals about.

રોજ રાતના, ભૂલ્યા વગર, ફાનસ લઈને ચોર કે જંગલી જાનવરોની ખાત્રી કરવા તે ખેતરમાં જતો.



One night a storm blew up. The sky was black and heavy with thunder. The lightning flashed. The rain poured down in bucketsful.

એક રાતે તોફાન આવ્યું. ગાજવીજથી આકાશ કાળુંમસ ને ભારેખમ થઇ ગયું. વીજળી ચમકતી હતી. વરસાદ ગાગર ભરીને વરસ્યો.

Well, there was this thief, and he thought to himself, "As sure as rain is wet, that there radish farmer's in his bed, sleeping snuggishly. It's not fit to turn a dog out."

એક ચોર પોતાના મનમાં વિચાર કરતો હતો, "વરસાદ ભીનો છે એ જેટલું સાચું છે તેટલું જ સાચું મૂળાનો ખેડૂત તેની પથારીમાં લપાઈને સૂતો હશે એ છે. આવામાં કૂતરાને પણ બહાર છૂટો ન મૂકાય."

So he took a few strong jute sacks to the field and started pulling up the radishes. In minutes the first sack was full.

આમ કેટલાક શણના મજબૂત કોથળા લઇ તે ખેતરમાં ગયો ને મૂળાને મૂળમાંથી ખેંચવા લાગ્યો. મિનિટોમાં એક કોથળો ભરાઇ ગયો.

By this time the sky was getting brighter, so he said to himself, "I'll just fill the rest of the sacks, then I'd better be on my way."

ત્યાં સુધીમાં આકાશ ઊઘડવા માંડયું હતું, તેથી તેણે પોતાની જાતને કહ્યું, "હું બાકી રહેલા કોથળા ભરીને મારે રસ્તે પડીશ."

What he didn't know was that the farmer was wide awake. What's more, he thought he had better go and have a look at his radishes, to see what damage the storm had done.

તેને ખબર નહોતી કે ખેડૂત જાગતો પડયો હતો. વધુમાં તેને વિચાર આવ્યો કે મૂળા જોઈ આવું ને તોફાનમાં કેટલું નુકસાન થયું છે તે પણ જોતો આવું.

You can guess what happened next. He caught the thief red-handed. He said to him, “What do you think you’re up to?”

પછી શું થયું તે તો તમે ધારી શકો છો. તેણે ચોરને ગુનો કરતાં પકડયો. તેને કહ્યું, “તારા મનમાં તું શું સમજે છે?”

“Look, I did not wish to be here. I was walking along that road over yonder, minding my own business, when the storm blew me into this field.”

“જો, મારી ઇચ્છા અહીં હોવાની હતી જ નહીં. હું તો મારું સંભાળીને, દૂર પેલી સડક પર ચાલ્યો જતો હતો, તોફાને મને આ ખેતરમાં ફંગોળી દીધો.”

“Fair enough, but why have you picked these radishes, then?”

“ભલે, ઠીક છે, પરંતુ તો પછી આ મૂળા તેં શા માટે લીધા?”

“Well, you see, it was like this. I was holding on to these radishes to stop myself being blown away.”

“વાત આમ બની હતી. મારી જાતને ઊડી જતી બચાવવા હું મૂળાને વળગી પડયો હતો.”

"In that case, how come the radishes are in your sacks?"

"તો પછી મૂળા તારા કોથળામાં ક્યાંથી આવ્યા?"

The thief replied, “That was my only mistake.”

ચોરે જવાબ આપ્યો, “એજ મારી એક ભૂલ થઇ ગઇ.”

GLOSSARY

Radishes radishes grown in Bangladesh have the same taste as those found in Britain, but in shape and size they are like carrots. They are white, sometimes with a hint of red

Jute fibre from the bark of East Indian plants which is used for making sacks

STORYTELLERS

રમૂજ કથાઓની શ્રેણી

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